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Monthly Performance Report

HOWARD'S GROVE SCHOOL

MARCH 1979





National Solar Heating and Cooling Demonstration Program

National Solar Data Program



__NOTICE ____

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MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT HOWARDS GROVE SCHOOL MARCH 1979

I. SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

This solar energy heating system is designed to provide 58 percent of the space heating for an addition to the North View Elementary School in Howards Grove, Wisconsin. The addition contains 12,330 square feet of heated space. The collection subsystem has a total of 138 collectors arranged in six arrays each containing 23 flat-plate air collectors. The arrays, manufactured by Sun Stone Solar Energy Equipment, have a gross area of 2,685 square feet. The collectors face south at an angle of 50 degrees from the horizontal. Air is the medium used for transferring energy from the collector arrays to storage. Solar energy is stored in a 16- by 21- by 6-foot concrete block bin containing 1,500 cubic feet of crushed rock located below the equipment room. When solar energy is inadequate to provide space heating, auxiliary thermal energy is supplied from a 397,200 Btu/hr fuel oil boiler. The space heating control system modulates control dampers to mix outside air, return air and thermally heated air (solar and auxiliary) to maintain a building temperature of 67°F during the day and 55°F at night. (A minimum of 10 percent fresh outside air is required by law to be mixed with return air.) This system, shown schematically in Figure 1, has three modes of operation.

Mode 1 - Collector-to-Storage: This mode is entered when there is a difference in temperature of 17°F between the outlet of the collector arrays and the temperature at the bottom of rock storage. Air is drawn from the collector arrays, using the collector circulating fan F2, into the rock storage and recirculated to the collectors. Circulation continues in this mode until the difference in temperature between the collector outlet and bottom of rock storage is less than 4°F.

<u>Mode 2 - Storage-to-Classrooms Occupied</u>: This mode is entered using a seven-day clock with a manual override. Circulation fan Fl runs

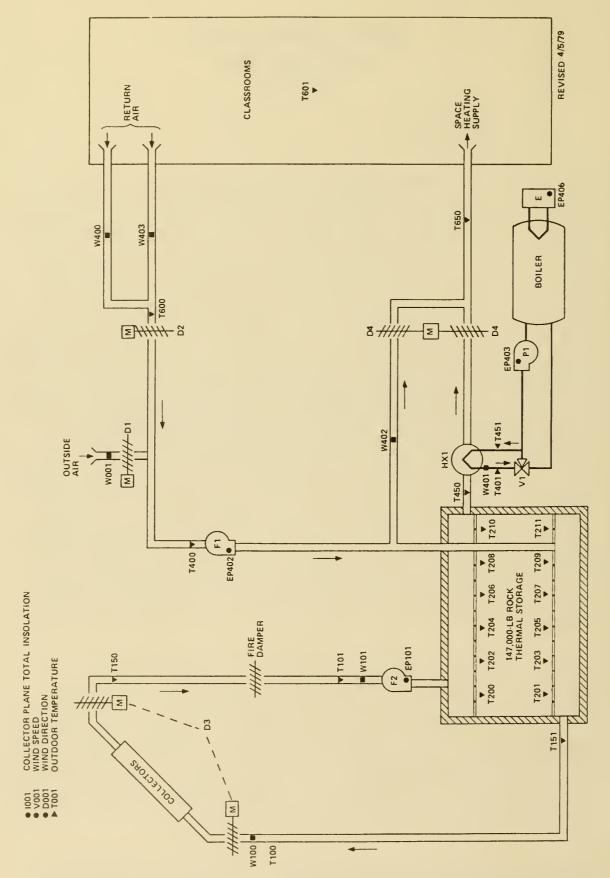


Figure 1. HOWARDS GROVE SCHOOL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM SCHEMATIC

continuously to transfer energy from storage and to provide ventilation. Outside air and return air dampers are modulated to supply fresh air at a mixed return air temperature of 60°F. Multizone control dampers modulate the mixed return air with thermally heated air from storage to maintain the design supply air temperature. The auxiliary fuel oil boiler supplements solar energy to meet the space heating demand and maintain the design internal temperatures. The seven-day clock terminates this mode at the end of each school day and on weekends.

Mode 3 - Storage-to-Classrooms Unoccupied: This mode is entered when there is a demand for space heating and the system is not in the occupied mode. The outside air damper D1 is closed. Multizone control dampers modulate the return air with thermally heated air from storage to maintain the design supply temperature. The auxiliary fuel oil boiler supplements solar energy to meet the space heating demand and maintain the design internal temperatures. This mode terminates when the demand for space heating ceases, or the system is changed to the occupied mode.

Mode 1 can be operating when Modes 2 and 3 are active.

II. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The system performance evaluations discussed in this section are based primarily on the analysis of the data presented in the attached computer-generated monthly report. This attached report consists of daily site thermal and energy values for each subsystem, plus environmental data. The performance factors discussed in this report are based upon the definitions contained in NBSIR-76-1137, Thermal Data Requirements and Performance Evaluation Procedures for the National Solar Heating and Cooling Demonstration Program.

A. Introduction

The solar energy system at the Howards Grove School site operated continuously during the month of March. The system supplied 23 percent

of the space heating demand of 66.88 million Btu. Operation of the solar energy system resulted in a savings of 20.26 million Btu of fossil fuel (140 gallons of fuel oil) at an expense of 2.3 million Btu (674 kwh) of electrical energy. The solar energy system performance continued to improve this month with the reduction in heating requirement and the improved collector subsystem performance.

A detailed discussion of the weather conditions and solar energy system thermal performance is contained in the following paragraphs.

B. Weather

March weather conditions were near normal. The measured outside ambient temperature was 31°F, which is only 1°F higher than the 30°F predicted from long-term averages. The measured wind velocity was 5 mph, less than the 12.2 mph predicted from long-term averages.

The cloud cover was above normal as indicated by a lower measured insolation as compared to the March predicted long-term monthly insolation. The measured insolation in the plane of the collector averaged 1,063 Btu/ft 2 -day, which is less than the expected long-term average of 1,467 Btu/ft 2 -day derived from measurements taken from an average of Green Bay and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, data.

C. System Thermal Performance

<u>Collector</u> - Of the 88.46 million Btu of solar energy incident on the collector array during March, 58.52 million Btu were incident on the array when fan F2 was operating. The system collected 17.28 million Btu, or 20 percent of the total insolation incident on the collector array. However, the collected energy represents 30 percent of the operational incident energy. The operation of the collector circulating fan F2 required 0.58 million Btu of electrical energy.

Storage - Of the 17.28 million Btu of solar energy collected, 16.96 million Btu were delivered to rock storage. A total of 0.32 million Btu

was lost in the collector-to-rock bed ducting. A total of 15.40 million Btu was extracted from storage and delivered to the space heating subsystem.

Space Heating Load - The space heating load was near normal because the average monthly temperature of 31°F was near the 30°F predicted longterm average for March. The 1,067 heating degree-days measured at the site is near the 1,085 heating degree-days predicted from long-term averages. The design heating load data for March was 86.3 million Btu from data supplied through the Department of Energy. However, the design heating load was calculated assuming that a large controlled infiltration of outside air exists during normal operation of the site. Also, environmental energy infiltration to the rock bed contributed to satisfying the space heating load. A total of 1.51 million Btu of environmental energy was stored in the rock bed. Therefore, a better method of determining the predicted space heating load had to be devised.

The method chosen was to use the building heat loss coefficient (UA) computed using the predicted design loads for December, 1978, and January and February, 1979, when little outside air infiltration exists. The computed UA for the period was 2,963 Btu/ft 2 -day. The variance of the UA's for each of these months was less than 75 Btu/ft 2 -day from the indicated average for the period. The space heating load predicted for March is 75.88 million Btu based on the measured 1,063 heating degreedays and the building UA value of 2,963 Btu/ft 2 -day.

The measured space heating demand of 66.88 million Btu was satisfied by 15.4 million Btu of solar energy and 51.48 million Btu of auxiliary thermal energy resulting in a solar fraction of 23 percent. The 51.48 million Btu of auxiliary thermal energy for space heating were supplied by the consumption of 67.74 million Btu of fuel oil. This amounted to 469 gallons of fuel oil.

The analysis of the performance of the rock bed revealed that the large circulating fan added kinetic energy to the building circulation air

flow. This kinetic energy produced a 1.5°F temperature rise across the circulation fan and, thus, contributed to satisfying the space heating demand. The magnitude of the induced energy amounted to 4.79 million Btu during March. The measured space heating demand, when combined with the circulating fan and the environmental energy contribution to the space heating load, results in an indicated space heating demand of 73.18 million Btu, which compares well with the predicted load of 75.88 million Btu.

D. Observations

The performance of the solar energy system continued to improve over earlier winter months. The removal of the snow from the collectors in January was the major contributor to a better solar system performance. The collection subsystem performance is continuing to improve toward the expected performance of the subsystem.

In March, the reduced heating load allowed the building circulation fan to shut off when the control system switched from Mode 2 (Occupied) to Mode 3 (Unoccupied). The collector fan continued to run until later in the afternoon. The circulation fan shut-down reduces the rock bed interval pressure which, in-turn, allows the collector fan to operate more efficiently. The collector fan air flow to the rock bed increases from 3,400 to 4,950 cubic feet per minute. This condition is suspected to be exaggerated by collector leakage. The absorber plate temperature and collector outlet temperatures appear to verify this condition. Also, during the early winter months, a half-closed fire damper door caused an indication of unbalanced air flow to exist which substantiates the existance of collector leakage.

In addition to the collector array leakage, the collector array efficiency normally increases as the operating point moves from winter to spring. This is consistent with an air system in which the collector array return air temperature is nearly constant, which is the case for the Northview

Elementary School (Howard's Grove) solar energy system. As the ambient outside temperature rises, the operating point shifts toward lower values and the collector efficiency increases.

E. Energy Savings

The solar energy system installed in Howards Grove School resulted in savings of 20.26 million Btu (140 gallons) of fuel oil during March at an expense of 2.3 million Btu (674 kwh) of electrical operating energy. The space heating energy savings calculations are based on the energy requirements of a conventional propane-fired furnace with an efficiency of 76 percent compared to the energy requirements of the solar energy system.

III. ACTION STATUS

No outstanding action was pending at the end of March.

SOLAR HEATING AND COCLING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

MCNTHLY REPORT SITE SUMMARY

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SITE/SYSTEM DESCRIPTION:

THE HOWARD GROVE SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM PROVIDES SPACE HEATING FOR A
12.330 SQUARE FOOT ADDITION TO THE NORTHVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
IN HOWARDS GROVE. WIS. THE SYSTEM USES AIR AS THE ENERGY TRANSFER
MEDIUM. 2685 SQUARE FEET OF COLLECTORS. TO COLLECT AND STORE SOLAR
ENERGY IN A 1500 CU. FT. ROCK STORAGE UNIT. RETURN AIR FROM THE SCHOOL
IS DIRECTED THROUGH THE ROCK UNIT FOR SPACE HEATING. AUXILIARY HEAT IS
PROVIDED BY AN IN-DUCT HX SUPPLIED BY A FUEL CIL BOILER.

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SCLAR HEATING AND CCCLING DEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM

MCNTHLY REPORT SITE SUMMARY

SITE: HOWARDS GROVE SCHOOL, HOWARDS GROVE, WIS REPORT PERIOD: MARCH, 1979

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SYSTEM PERFORMANCE FACTOR: 0.698

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SOLAR HEATING AND COCLING DEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM

MGNTHLY REPORT SPACE HEATING SUBSYSTEM

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SOLAR FEATING AND COCLING DEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM

MCNTHLY REPORT ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

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